



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS  
MANPOWER PLANS AND POLICY DIVISION  
3280 RUSSELL ROAD  
QUANTICO, VA 22134

IN REPLY REFER TO  
1040  
MPP-30  
20 Feb 18

MEMORANDUM FOR DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES  
(DACOWITS)

Subj: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) REGARDING RETENTION OF WOMEN  
VERSUS RETENTION OF MEN IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

Ref: (a) DACOWITS' RFI dtd March 2018  
(b) Marine Corps response to DACOWITS RFI dtd March 2017

1. The DACOWITS RFI dated March 2018 includes the following:
  - a. Provide definition of operational career fields (officer and enlisted) for the Service.
  - b. Provide comparison of:
    - (1) Retention of women in operational specialties vs. overall retention of women.
    - (2) Retention of women in operational specialties vs. retention of women in support-oriented career disciplines.
    - (3) Retention of women in operational specialties vs. retention of men in the same disciplines.
    - (4) Retention of women in support-oriented career disciplines vs. retention of men in the same disciplines.
  - c. What actions is the Service taking to determine root cause and address any disparities?
2. Reference (a) states that "Data provided by the Military Services last September indicated that generally women in operational career fields have higher attrition than their male counterparts." As shown in reference (b), the data provided by the Marine Corps does not make that indication.
3. As the Nation's premier expeditionary force in readiness, the Marine Corps defines all of its specialties as operational. As such, the below retention data of men versus women is provided:
  - a. Retention rates are generally similar between genders.

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b. For officers, females retain 4 percentage points lower at 9 years of service (YOS) and 3 percentage points higher at 12 YOS.

(1) Marine officer departures are typically at the 5, 9, 12, and 20 year decision points. At the initial decision point of 5 years, female separations are 0.8 percentage points higher than males.

(2) At the 9 years of service decision point, female officer separations are 4 percentage points higher than their male counterparts.

(3) At the 12 years decision point, the roles reverse and male officer separations surpass their female counterparts by 3 percentage points.

(4) Once attaining retirement eligibility at 20 years of service, the roles reverse once again at which point female officer separations are 4 percentage points higher than their male counterparts.

(5) The decision points coincide with end of initial contracts, end of obligation due to accepting orders, and retirement eligibility.

c. For enlisted Marines, females retain 3.4 percentage points higher at first reenlistment opportunity and 0.6 percentage points higher at 12 YOS.

(1) Enlisted Marine departures are typically greatest at the 4, 8, 12, 15, and 20 year decision points and those departure points are very similar regardless of gender. Marine reenlistments are typically four years in length and those decision points coincide with the end of contractual obligations.

(2) The continuation through recruit training for enlisted females is 92.6%, which is 3.0 percentage points below their male counterparts; however, at the first reenlistment opportunity, female Marines have a continuation rate of 54.5% which is 3.4 percentage points above their male counterparts.

(3) Enlisted females continue at the same rate as their male peers at 8 years of service with continuation rates of 76% and at 12 years of service see an increase in continuation rate to 86%, which is 0.6 percentage points above the male rate.

(4) At 15 years of service, female enlisted Marines exhibit a continuation rate of 85.9%, 2.4 percentage points lower than males.

(5) At full retirement eligibility (20 years of service), enlisted females continuation rates are 48.5%, which is 10.0 percentage points below their male counterparts.

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4. The Marine Corps does not access, retain, or promote by race, creed, color, or gender. The Marine Corps has no programs or initiatives that focus specifically on reducing attrition and increasing retention of women. Marine Corps programs focus on increasing retention of quality Marines - regardless of gender.

5. The point of contact regarding this matter is Captain Raul P. Garza at (703) 784-9365/66 or raul.p.garza@usmc.mil.



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